

The Influence of Calvinism on the Scottish Reformation

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The comparatively late arrival of the Reformation in Scotland provided Scots with ample opportunity to assimilate the theological standpoints of most influential continental reformers. Through first-hand experience and personal contact, through correspondence and the printed word, Scottish reformers were able to keep abreast with the latest developments in Europe. In church government, as in doctrine, there could be little which escaped their attention. Indeed, if Scotland needed any example other than scripture she had only to look to Germany, England and Scandinavia, and to Switzerland, France and the Netherlands. Narrowing the field somewhat, the claim has been advanced that the earlier polity of the Scottish church had "a strong Lutheran flavour about it".¹ Yet, when an examination is made of the many and varied influences to which Scotland was subjected at the Reformation, Calvinism, it would seem, was not the least significant.

In its final form, the Scottish Reformation, it need scarcely be doubted, was characterised by a general Calvinism in its solution to the challenges of theology and ecclesiastical polity. The Scots Confession of Faith, as the doctrinal statement of the Reformation, and the Book of Discipline, outlining the envisaged structure of the church, forcefully and sometimes eloquently display a firm attachment to Reformed principles. In these documents, little or nothing distinctive of the old Lutheranism which had marked the initial stages of the Reformation can be detected. The span of three decades and more of Reformed teaching and example stood between the first infiltration of Lutheran thought into Scotland and the compilation of the Scots Confession in 1560.

The degree to which the reformed church was doctrinally affected by Calvin's teaching does perhaps lie within the province of the theologian rather than that of the historian, but scholars in both disciplines have long recognised Calvin's remarkable influence as the "founder of a civilisation".² One who is both an historian and a theologian has indicated how the Scots Confession "affirms Calvinism with a simple fervour",³ another has described that work as a "Calvinistic explication of the Creeds",⁴ and long ago A. F. Mitchell clearly demonstrated how passages of that work

¹ G. Donaldson, *Scotland: Church and Nation through Sixteen Centuries*, (2nd edn., Edinburgh, 1972), 58.

² E. G. Léonard, *A History of Protestantism*, i, (London, 1965), 292.

³ J. T. McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism*, (New York, 1967), 299.

⁴ G. D. Henderson, *Presbyterianism*, (Aberdeen, 1954), 32.

were directly derived from Genevan sources.⁵ It is not surprising therefore that a recent commentator should remark that the Confession of 1560 "affirmed the full Calvinistic doctrine of the Lord's Supper in strikingly realistic language".⁶

The doctrine of predestination, it is true, was not stressed in the Confession; but neither was it developed in the first edition of Calvin's *Institutes* in 1536, and it was only in later years that the Genevan accorded the doctrine a more central position in his theology.⁷ If the authors of the Scots Confession deemed it unnecessary to treat the subject systematically, the kernel of the doctrine was clearly present: the "elect" who were chosen "befoir the fundatioun of the world was laid", are referred to in seven separate passages, though the "reprobate", so termed, are specifically mentioned only thrice, and the distinctive phrase "the eternall and immutabill decree of God fra quhilk all our salvatioun springs and depends"⁸ appears but once.⁹ Yet whatever the deficiencies in the teaching on predestination in the Scots Confession, the standpoint of one leading reformer can be satisfactorily attested. John Knox, "the apostle of the Scots",¹⁰ left no one in any doubt of his views on the subject. These he had proclaimed in his treatise on predestination, published at Geneva in 1560, in which he sought to assail Calvin's adversaries and to vindicate "the wordes of this most godlie writer from whose judgement none of us doeth dissent in this mater".¹¹ Knox, for one, evidently attached a central importance to the doctrine of predestination, for in his treatise he forcefully explained how "the doctrine of God's eternal predestination is so necessarie to the church of God that without the same can faith neither be truely taught nether surely established".¹² Elsewhere in his writings, Knox, it is true, was prepared to adopt and to use to good effect the religious symbolism of the covenants.¹³ In some tentative sense, therefore, he may be regarded as a precursor of Robert Rollock and Robert Bruce, two later exponents of covenant thought in Scotland.¹⁴ Yet

⁵ A. F. Mitchell, *The Scottish Reformation*, (Edinburgh, 1900), 104-112.

⁶ B. A. Gerrish, "The Lord's Supper in the Reformed Confessions", *Theology Today*, xxiii, (1966), 224-243 at 239.

⁷ F. Wendel, *Calvin*, (London, 1972), 265ff.

⁸ *The Works of John Knox*, ed. D. Laing, 6 vols. (Wodrow Society, Edinburgh, 1846-8), ii, 100 and n.2.

⁹ *Ibid.* ii, 98, 100, 101, 108-9, 114, 119, 120.

¹⁰ T. McCrie, *Life of John Knox*, (Edinburgh, 1855), 463.

¹¹ Knox, *Works*, v, 21-468, at 169.

¹² *Ibid.* 25.

¹³ *Ibid.* ii, 86; iii, 190-197; iv, 123-5, 434, 489, 500, 505-6; vi, 234, 239, 307, 487.

¹⁴ Cf. G. D. Henderson, *The Burning Bush*, (Edinburgh, 1957), 68; S. A. Burrell, "The Covenant Idea as a Revolutionary Symbol: Scotland, 1596-1637", *Church History*, xxvii, (1958), 338-349, at 341.

covenant or federal theology, if carried to extremes, could undermine the doctrine of predestination. It ultimately shifted the emphasis in Calvinism away from the eternal decree of God by focusing attention on the reciprocal obligations of the contract between man and God.¹⁵ Even so, Calvin himself had readily employed the language of the covenants within a wide variety of contexts;¹⁶ and Knox evidently found no difficulty in reconciling to his own satisfaction the doctrine of predestination with the concept of the covenant.¹⁷

In scope, the Scots Confession is comparable with other Reformed confessions of the period; and if a parallel is to be sought it may be found in two confessions inspired by Calvin: the French Confession of 1559 and the Belgic Confession written in 1559 by Guido de Brès and published in 1561.¹⁸ But there was also present in the Confession of 1560, as there was in its continental counterparts, a certain body of doctrine which would accommodate protestants of varying ecclesiastical viewpoints and which need not necessarily offend those with Lutheran susceptibilities. An indication of the considerable measure of doctrinal accord between those of differing protestant persuasions had been demonstrated much earlier, in a continental context, in the conference at Marburg in 1529 when Luther and Zwingli reached agreement on fourteen and a half out of fifteen articles and agreed to differ only in their interpretation of the Lord's Supper.¹⁹

On this latter theme, it has been accurately observed that "the Scots Confession of Faith of 1560 declared its belief in a Real Presence".²⁰ Yet it would seem to be a mistake were one to conclude from this that by rejecting Zwingli the Scots were thereby committed to a Lutheran interpretation of the Lord's Supper. Indeed, on the contrary, there is no evidence, it has been pointed out, that "an explicitly Lutheran Communion was ever celebrated in Scotland".²¹ Whatever the accuracy of this statement, it is at any rate significant that Knox should claim in his *History*, written in the 1560s, that when he celebrated communion at St Andrews in 1547 he did so "in the same puritie that now it is ministrat in the churches of Scotland, wyth that

¹⁵ A. C. McGiffert, *Protestant Thought before Kant*, (London, 1911), 153-4; E. H. Emerson, "Calvin and Covenant Theology", *Church History*, xxv, (1956), 136-143, at 138.

¹⁶ See index to J. T. McNeill's edition of Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols. (London, 1961), ii, 1653.

¹⁷ Knox, *Works*, v, 46-7, 263, 265, 279, 343-345.

¹⁸ P. Schaff, *A History of the Creeds of Christendom*, 3 vols. (London, 1877), iii, 356-436.

¹⁹ *Luther's Works*, edd. J. Pelikan and H. T. Lehmann, 55 vols. (Philadelphia, 1955-1969), vol. 38, pp. 85-9.

²⁰ G. Donaldson, *Scotland: Church and Nation through Sixteen Centuries*, 68.

²¹ J. S. McEwen, *The Faith of John Knox*, (London, 1961), 55.

same doctrin, that he had taught unto thame".²² Three years later, in 1550, Knox affirmed the essentially Calvinist tenet that "when I eat and drink at that tabill, I opinlie confes the frute and vertew of Chrystis bodie, of his blude and passion, to apperteane to my self; and that I am a member of his misticall bodie".²³

Calvinists, no less than Lutherans, believed in a real presence in the Supper, and a study of the eucharistic doctrine of the Scots Confession would suggest that the reformers in 1560 deliberately departed from the distinctive teaching of Luther and consciously adhered to that of Calvin instead. Whereas Luther had asserted that the body of Christ is present not only in the Supper but substantially present in the elements and received by the mouths of believers and unbelievers alike (despite the consequences for the latter),²⁴ the Scots in their Confession of Faith seem to deny the essence of Luther's teaching and to assert something significantly different. If the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation was rejected outright so too was Luther's belief in consubstantiation implicitly set aside, as was the teaching of the sacramentarians, on the other side of the divide, who affirmed the "sacramentis to be nothing else but naked and bair signes".²⁵ If the beliefs of Rome, Wittenberg and Zurich were regarded in varying degrees as somehow erroneous or inadequate, those of Geneva had evidently more to commend themselves.

Following Calvin, the Scots found no justification for any notion of the ubiquity of the body. Christ's glorified body, they maintained, remains in heaven on the right hand of God and cannot descend so as to be materially present in and under the elements.²⁶ Instead, believers alone, through faith, are raised up towards heaven to receive what Christ offers in the sacrament.²⁷ This mystical or sacred union, the Confession plainly taught, "is wrocht by operatioun of the Holy Ghost, who by trew faith caryes us above all thingis that ar visible, carnall, and earthlie, and maikis us to feid upoun the body and bloode of Christ Jesus, whiche was ones brokin and schedd for us, whiche now is in the heavin, and appeareth in the presence of his Father for us".²⁸ For the Scots, the body and blood of Christ are clearly not materially present in the sacrament; they cannot be orally received so as physically to nourish the body. On

²² Knox, *Works*, i, 201-2.

²³ *Ibid*, iii, 67.

²⁴ *Luther's Works*, vol. 36, pp. 32, 342ff.; vol. 37, pp. 29, 87ff., 100-101, 109-110, 354, 367; vol. 38, pp. 26, 83, 306.

²⁵ Knox, *Works*, ii, 114, 115; cf. Calvin, *Institutes*, ed. H. Beveridge, 3 vols. (Edinburgh, 1845-6), IV, xvii, 10; Calvin, *Tracts relating to the Reformation*, ed. H. Beveridge, 3 vols. (Edinburgh, 1844-51), ii, 307.

²⁶ Knox, *Works*, ii, 114; cf. Calvin, *Institutes*, IV, xvii, 16-19; Calvin, *Tracts*, ii, 218-219, 220.

²⁷ Knox, *Works*, ii, 114-115, 117-118; cf. Calvin, *Institutes*, IV, xvii, 12, 18-19, 31, 36; Calvin, *Tracts*, ii, 280, 373.

²⁸ Knox, *Works*, ii, 114; cf. Calvin, *Institutes*, IV, xvii, 1, 3, 5, 18-19, 32, 38; Calvin, *Tracts*, ii, 282, 374, 377.

the contrary, "in the Supper, rychtlie used, Christ Jesus is so joyned with us that he becomis the verray nurishment and foode of our saullis".²⁹ Indeed, as Knox had taught a decade earlier, "in the sacrament we receive Jesus Chryst spirituallie".³⁰ To assert this was not to deny the communion of Christ's person in the sacrament, but only to deny a substantial or material presence in the elements. The Confession itself made careful distinction between Christ's "naturall substance" and the elements as the sacramental signs, "so that we will neather wirschip the signes in place of that which is signifeid by thame; neather yit do we dispyse and interprete thame as unprofitable and vane".³¹ Such an interpretation would seem to be patently Calvinist; and Calvin himself had concluded that the³²

"sacred communion of flesh and blood by which Christ transfuses his life into us, just as if it penetrated our bones and marrow, he testifies and seals in the Supper, and that not by presenting a vain or empty sign, but by there exerting an efficacy of the Spirit by which he fulfils what he promises. And truly the thing there signified he exhibits and offers to all who sit down at that spiritual feast, although it is beneficially received by believers only who receive this great benefit with true faith and heartfelt gratitude".

On each crucial issue when confronted with a choice of following either Luther or Calvin, the Scots seem instinctively to have chosen the latter; and it was scarcely surprising that the general assembly should specify that the sacraments should be administered after the manner specified in "the Book of Geneva".³³

Attention, however, need not be confined to the Confession of Faith, for the Book of Common Order,³⁴ popularly known as "Knox's Liturgy", is an obvious example of the wholesale importation into Scotland of liturgical forms used by Knox's Genevan congregation. Included in that work was a copy of Calvin's catechism, and in 1562 and again in 1564 the general assembly sanctioned and authorised the Book of Common Order as a serviceable directory for worship in the Church of Scotland,³⁵ but even earlier, with the very composition of the Book of Discipline, this essentially Genevan publication had already become for Scots "oure buke of Common

²⁹ Knox, *Works*, ii, 114; cf. Calvin, *Institutes*, IV, xvii, 1, 3, 10, 24, 32; Calvin, *Tracts*, ii, 374.

³⁰ Knox, *Works*, iii, 75.

³¹ *Ibid.* ii, 115; cf. Calvin, *Institutes*, IV, xvii, 11, 19, 21; Calvin, *Tracts*, ii, 215, 224.

³² Calvin, *Institutes*, IV, xvii, 10.

³³ *The Booke of the Universall Kirk, Acts and Proceedings of the General Assemblies of the Kirk of Scotland*, (BUK), 3 vols. and appendix vol. (Bannatyne and Maitland Clubs, Edinburgh, 1839), i, 30.

³⁴ Knox, *Works*, vi, 293ff.

³⁵ BUK, i, 30, 54.

Ordour",³⁶ "the Booke of our Common Ordour, callit the Ordour of Geneva".³⁷ The assimilation had become complete. Contained within the Book of Common Order was a metrical version of the psalms, and some have found it significant that the Scots should look to Geneva, like their French counterparts, and should officially authorise the use of the metrical psalms as an integral part of public worship rather than adopt the hymns of Lutheran churches.³⁸

Although some later commentators have been tempted to minimize the extent of Calvin's influence in Scotland, contemporaries themselves were by no means unaware of the influences at work. One otherwise unknown Scotsman, when confronted by the discipline of St Andrews kirk session in August 1561, declared that "he was nether ane Papist nor ane Calvynist, nor of Paul nor of Apollo, bot Jesus Cristis man",³⁹ and Bishop Leslie, as a good Catholic, was quite convinced in his own mind that Willock, Goodman and Knox were "the ministeris of Calvine".⁴⁰ Another Catholic controversialist, Ninian Winzet, in a polemic directed against Knox and the "Calviniane ministeris", derisively spoke of "your grete maister Calvin", of the "lernit theologis of a gret number in Scotland and Geneva", designating Knox as "principal Patriark of the Calviniane court", and he went on to warn the ministers not to "mak a monstrous Idoll of your Maister Calvin".⁴¹ In short, what Winzet was really complaining about was that tendency of Scottish reformed thought which, he felt, "bindis and astrictis us only to the doctrine and ordour laitlie set furth at Geneva".⁴² Not only had Winzet conferred with what he called "sum strang Calvinianis" as well as with "weill leirnit catholikis",⁴³ but he also professed an acquaintance with Calvin's works,⁴⁴ and since there were other Scottish Catholics who found a place for the works of Calvin on the shelves of their libraries, it is safe to assume both that there was a ready supply of Calvinist literature and that it was read by reformers as well as Catholics.

³⁶ Knox, *Works*, ii, 239.

³⁷ *Ibid.* 210. Carswell in his Gaelic translation of the B.C.O. likewise acknowledged his debt to "the Christian brethren who were in the city called Geneva". *Foirm Na N-Urrnuidheadh*, ed. R. L. Thomson, (Edinburgh, 1970), 11, 180.

³⁸ W. Cowan, "The Scottish Reformation Psalmody", *ante*, i, 29-47.

³⁹ *Register of the Minister, Elders and Deacons of the Christian Congregation of St Andrews, 1559-1600*, ed. D. H. Fleming, 2 vols. (Scottish History Society, Edinburgh, 1889-1890), i, 135.

⁴⁰ Leslie, *The Historie of Scotland*, edd. E. G. Cody and W. Murison, 2 vols. (Scottish Text Society, Edinburgh, 1888-95), ii, 449; *cf.* 447, 464.

⁴¹ Winzet, *Certane tractatis for reformatioun of doctryne and maneris in Scotland*, (Maitland Club, Edinburgh, 1835), 37, 56, 58, 74, 79, 87.

⁴² *Ibid.* 69.

⁴³ *Ibid.* 55.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 74, 79, 89.

Among the pre-Reformation purchases of Adam Bothwell, the Catholic bishop of Orkney who conformed at the Reformation, were Calvin's *Commentaries on Isaiah*, published in 1551;⁴⁵ John Duncanson, a canon regular of St Andrews who died in 1566 and who also conformed, possessed a copy of Calvin's *Opuscula*, printed in Geneva in 1552;⁴⁶ John Craig, a Dominican friar and later minister at Edinburgh, became converted to protestantism by reading Calvin's *Institutes*;⁴⁷ and John Row, a Jesuit who subsequently became minister at Perth, was finally won over to protestantism by visiting Geneva *en route* from Italy to France.⁴⁸

Few, it would seem, could disagree with the conclusion that the theology of the post-Reformation church was characterised by at least a moderate Calvinism. This no doubt held good for England, too, but whereas the conservative form of polity retained by the English church was determined in the main by the crown which wished no irrevocable break with the past, in Scotland a differing political situation had enabled a more radical type of church organisation to come into being, a polity which cast aside much of the traditional medieval organisation and one which was therefore moulded not on the example of England, or of the Lutheran countries, but rather on that of the "best reformed churches"⁴⁹ of Switzerland and France. Having adopted a Calvinist theology, and being freed from the restraining influences which even a godly monarch might have wished to exercise, the Scots were able to adopt an essentially Calvinist polity. Indeed, not the least of Calvinism's contributions to the Scottish Reformation was its ability to provide to Knox and his colleagues the necessary religious justification for a rebellion in a way in which submissive Lutheranism did not,⁵⁰ and, equally, its ability to provide the religious movement with an ecclesiastical organisation capable of functioning effectively in times of adversity when the church lay under the cross, as well as in more favourable circumstances when the church was established and accorded due recognition by the state.

Wherever a Calvinist polity prevailed, government of the church at congregational level was entrusted to a consistory composed of one or more ministers and a number of elected elders and

⁴⁵ J. Durkan and A. Ross, *Early Scottish Libraries*, (Glasgow, 1961), 29.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 93. For other Scottish Catholics who possessed copies of Calvin's works in their libraries, see *ibid.* 59, 83, 131.

⁴⁷ Spottiswoode, *History of the Church of Scotland*, 3 vols. (Spottiswoode Society, Edinburgh, 1851-1865), iii, 92.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* ii, 320.

⁴⁹ The phrase occurs in *BUK*, i, 246; Calderwood, *The History of the Kirk of Scotland*, ed. T. Thomson, 8 vols. (Wodrow Society, Edinburgh, 1842-1849), iii, 222.

⁵⁰ Knox, *Works*, i, 442-3; ii, 281ff., 425-460; iv, 415-16; Goodman, *How Superior Powers Ought to be Obeyed*, (Facsimile Text Society, New York, 1931), *passim*.

deacons. In Scotland, the Reformation seems to have followed the Swiss pattern in penetrating the burghs and surrounding countryside. As a result, the "privy kirks" of the 1550s evolved into the kirk sessions of the 1560s.⁵¹ This peculiar polity observed in Calvinist churches did not escape the attention of Ninian Winzet who asked the reformers to justify their introduction of a "new ordour of Eldaris" in the kirk,⁵² and the difference between the various churches of the protestant persuasion was a subject which also attracted the attention of Winzet who lectured the Scottish reformers accordingly:⁵³

"your selfis knawis Ingland, Denmark and Alemannie except sum Calvinistis and utheris strange sectis praetending reformatioun alsua by the Romane kirk to dissent in mony heidis fra your doctrine."

Nor did the impact of Calvin's teaching, it may be added, go unnoticed by Richard Hooker, eleven years the senior of Archbishop Spottiswoode in Scotland, who described how the reformer's writings became "almost the very canon to judge both doctrine and discipline by" and, after describing how the French churches "all cast according to that mould which Calvin had made", he added the illuminating, though hardly surprising, comment that "the church of Scotland in erecting the fabric of their reformation took the selfsame pattern."⁵⁴ Even Archbishop Spottiswoode could scarcely efface, had he wished to do so, the reality of the reformers' debt to Geneva. On his return to Scotland, Knox, we are told, strove "by all means to conform the government of the Church with that which he had seen in Geneva", though in another passage of his *History*, Spottiswoode acknowledged that the first Book of Discipline was "framed by John Knox, partly in imitation of the Reformed Churches of Germany, partly of that which he had seen in Geneva".⁵⁵

Whatever the precise meaning which ought to be attached to the phrase "the Reformed Churches of Germany", the inclusion of Germany in his description has led some to suggest that the origins of some aspects of the Scottish polity "are to be sought not in Geneva or France but in the Lutheran churches" and that the "possibility of a debt to Denmark cannot be overlooked".⁵⁶ It is interesting that Cecil, in a letter to the Lords of the Congregation in July 1559, should recommend to the Scots for their attention the

⁵¹ Knox, *Works*, i, 300; vi, 78; Calderwood, *History*, i, 333.

⁵² Winzet, *Certane Tractatis*, 90.

⁵³ *Ibid.* 86.

⁵⁴ Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, Preface, ii, 8, in *Works*, ed. I. Walton, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1865).

⁵⁵ Keith, *History of the Affairs of Church and State in Scotland*, 3 vols. (Spottiswoode Society, Edinburgh, 1844-50), iii, 15, quoting from Spottiswoode's MS. *History*; Spottiswoode, *History*, i, 371.

⁵⁶ G. Donaldson, "The Example of Denmark in the Scottish Reformation", *Scottish Historical Review*, (SHR), xxvii, 57-64, at 57, 64.

Danish financial settlement for the maintenance of the ministry, remarking that he knew of "no better example in any reformed state than I have heard to be in Denmark".⁵⁷ For the Scots, what exactly Cecil's example amounted to in practice it might be hard to say. What is perhaps more certain is that the response of the Scots was less than enthusiastic. In their reply, Argyll and Lord James Stewart reminded Cecil of the essential difference between the situation in Scotland where the Reformation was carried out in opposition to the crown and that "which ever favoured you and Denmark in all your reformations",⁵⁸ where their form and course had been directed by the crown. The timing of Cecil's advice, in any event, was scarcely opportune. The attention of the Lords of the Congregation was inevitably focused on more pressing issues. Not only so, perceptive Scots were evidently not ignorant of the doctrinal divergence which had emerged between the churches of Scotland and Scandinavia. Each church, it is true, accorded the other recognition of its ministry⁵⁹—it would not have occurred to anyone familiar with Reformation principles to have done otherwise—but it was not until 1587 that Andrew Melville, on the instructions of the general assembly, wrote to congratulate the ministers of Danskene (or Danzig) for "thair embracing of the trueth in the matter of the Sacrament".⁶⁰ All in all, it is certainly not easy to see why a church which decided to adopt a Reformed theology should seek to imitate features distinctive of Lutheran church polities. Even if Cecil's remark prompted Scots to look beyond the financial settlement⁶¹ to examine the polity operating in the Danish church, there would seem to be slender enough grounds for believing that the Scots deliberately borrowed any of the peculiar features of the Danish church system, and indeed evidence can be adduced which would suggest that despite any apparent or superficial similarities the polities of each church were founded on divergent principles.

In Scotland, unlike most Lutheran countries, the reformers asserted their belief in an autonomous ecclesiastical jurisdiction in no sense exercised at the discretion of the civil power or indeed

⁵⁷ *Calendar of the State Papers relating to Scotland and Mary, Queen of Scots, 1547-1603*, (CSP Scot.), ed. J. Bain, et al. 13 vols. (Edinburgh, 1898-1969), i, no. 506; Knox, *Works*, vi, 51-55, at 53.

⁵⁸ CSP Scot. i, no. 525; Knox, *Works*, vi, 65-7 at 66.

⁵⁹ *St Andrews Kirk Session Records*, i, 48-50.

⁶⁰ BUK, ii, 699.

⁶¹ The existence of an extract from the *Ordinatio Ecclesiastica* of the Danish and Norwegian Lutheran church, written in an apparently sixteenth-century Scottish hand, in NLS, Adv. MS. 29.2.8 fo 51, is doubtless significant (see G. Donaldson, *SHR*, xxvii, 60), but it is also revealing that the portion extracted from the *Ordinatio* should confine itself to the narrow issue of the financial settlement for the church and not deal directly with the wider theme of ecclesiastical polity.

of any earthly authority. Not only did the general assembly continue to meet without warrant from the secular authorities,⁶² but throughout the 1560s the church advanced the claim that its jurisdiction should be separate from that of the state.⁶³ Moreover, unlike his counterpart in some Lutheran countries,⁶⁴ the Scottish superintendent never became a mere royal official or instrument for royal control over the church. Ecclesiastical discipline was not to become a function of the magistracy and those continental precedents, both Lutheran and Reformed, where it did so become were clearly set aside in favour of what came to be the essentially Calvinist dichotomy of minister and magistrate.

In the regulation of its ministry, the Scottish church found no place either for the provost or for the ministerial deacon of the Danish system.⁶⁵ Nor did Scottish reformers assert as did the English that "from the Apostles' time there hath been these three orders of ministers in Christ's Church: Bishops, Priests, and Deacons".⁶⁶ Departing from the examples of Denmark and England, the Scots maintained the scriptural validity of a ministry which included elected elders and deacons (the latter as financial officers). Such an order, it was maintained, God had "now restored unto us agane efter that the publick face of the Kirk hes bene deformed by the tyranny of that Romane Antichrist".⁶⁷

The disinclination to accept magisterial supremacy in the spiritual realm, the emphasis upon the church's sovereignty and

⁶² Knox, *Works*, ii, 296, 395-7, 405-6; BUK, i, 292; Calderwood, *History*, iii, 305, 307. In the period prior to the "Black acts" of 1584, assemblies were summoned without reference to the king's consent. The normal method was for the assembly itself to decide the date of its next meeting (e.g. BUK, i, 7, 24, 64, 99, 133, 183, 186, 362, 391 *et passim*). In special circumstances, the assembly authorised Knox and the ministers of Edinburgh to intimate the date for the next assembly (e.g. BUK, i, 38, 64, 313, 330, 363; ii, 570, 606, 785, Knox, *Works*, ii, 414-415). The regent's proclamation for an assembly, technically a "convention", to meet in October 1572 to discuss the Catholic menace at home and abroad was exceptional (*Register of the Privy Council of Scotland*, (RPC), 1st ser., edd. J. H. Burton and D. Masson, 14 vols. (Edinburgh, 1877-98), ii, 168-9; BUK, i, 250-4); and Throckmorton's report to Elizabeth that the assembly of July 1567 was "reassembled by the Kynges auctorithye" (Knox, *Works*, vi, 555) is unsubstantiated (see BUK, i, 99). His statement doubtless reflects the events surrounding the deposition of Mary and the accession of her infant son (cf. Knox, *Works*, ii, 563-5), but his phraseology strongly suggests a lack of familiarity with Scottish practice.

⁶³ RPC, ii, 7; BUK, i, 140, 146; cf. BUK, i, 29, 50, 113, 128.

⁶⁴ Cf. M. Roberts, *The Early Vasas*, (Cambridge, 1968), 168-9; A. L. Drummond, *German Protestantism since Luther*, (London, 1951), 178.

⁶⁵ Cf. E. H. Dunkley, *The Reformation in Denmark*, (London, 1948), 54, 85, 89.

⁶⁶ *The Two Liturgies . . . of Edward VI*, ed. J. Ketley, (Parker Society, Cambridge, 1844), 16.

⁶⁷ Knox, *Works*, ii, 153.

the autonomy of its jurisdiction, the introduction of the eldership and the diaconate as advocated by Calvin in his *Institutes* and *Ordonnances Ecclésiastiques*⁶⁸ — in all this the Scots followed a course consistent with Calvinist teaching and at variance with Scandinavian or Anglican procedure. Even the adoption of the exercise, a feature familiar to many churches, was, it would seem, the product of Genevan contact and of the introduction of the *Forme of Prayers* (used by Knox's Genevan congregation) which contained an exposition of the functions and features of the exercise.⁶⁹ Knox's own experience of the Genevan exercise makes it highly probable that it was the latter which acted as a serviceable prototype for Knox and the reformers in Scotland.

Furthermore, the office of superintendent, which the Scots chose to introduce, had numerous parallels and cannot be said to have been a feature peculiar to Lutheran countries. The superintendent of Reformation thought may have originated in Saxony,⁷⁰ but the need for effective oversight was universally recognised. Whether or not bad Latin replaced good Greek matters little, but what is important is that while "superintendent" could be equated with "bishop" it could also mean "visitor", and indeed in some countries the term "visitor", or its equivalent, came to be preferred. If Martin Bucer in establishing a church constitution for Hesse made express provision for the office of superintendent,⁷¹ in other parts of Germany where Swiss influence predominated the term "superintendent", though not the substance of the office, was rejected in favour of another; and if Bucer in England was later to make the customary equation between the office of bishop and that of superintendent,⁷² it is also true that in England the office of superintendent came to be identified by others not with a bishop as such, but with the *chorepiscopus* or assistant bishop, or, alternatively, even with the office of rural dean.⁷³ A diversity in thought and interpretation undoubtedly existed.⁷⁴ The superintendent could in fact become the godly visitor⁷⁵ just as well as the godly bishop,⁷⁶ and this is what happened in Scotland where

⁶⁸ Calvin, *Institutes*, IV, iii, 8-9; *Corpus Reformatorum*, (CR), XXXVIII, *Ioannis Calvini Opera . . . omnia*, edd. G. Baum, E. Cunitz and E. Reuss, vol. X, (Brunswick, 1871-72), i, 22-3, 100-103.

⁶⁹ Knox, *Works*, iv, 178-9; cf. vi, 294.

⁷⁰ *Luther's Works*, vol. 40, pp. 313-14; *The Visitation of the Saxon Reformed Church*, ed. R. Laurence, (Dublin, 1839), 24ff.

⁷¹ E. G. Léonard, *A History of Protestantism*, i, 195.

⁷² Bucer, *Scripta Anglicana*, (Basle, 1577), 259.

⁷³ *HMC Salisbury MSS*, ii, (London, 1888), no. 580; P. Collinson, "Episcopacy and Reform in England in the Later Sixteenth Century", *Studies in Church History*, ed. G. J. Cuming, iii, (Leiden, 1966), 107-109; and *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, (London, 1967), 181-182.

⁷⁴ Cf. J. Pannier, "Calvin et l'épiscopat", *Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie religieuses*, vi, (1926), 305-335, at 307.

⁷⁵ Cf. *BUK*, i, 296-7.

⁷⁶ Cf. Calderwood, *History*, iii, 156-162.

the superintendent in the early 1570s came to hold office like the commissioner (and unlike the bishop in the commonly accepted sense of that word) for a term from one assembly to another.⁷⁷ Finally, in 1576, the office merged into that of the visitor, with some of the surviving superintendents continuing to act in that capacity.⁷⁸

It is significant, however, that both in Scotland and in France the term "superintendent" was initially accepted and only later came to be replaced. Not only did the French Confession of Faith in 1559 express its approval of "those elected to be superintendents"⁷⁹ but the view that the French Discipline initially rejected the term in 1559 would appear to be quite erroneous. This latter document, it has constantly to be borne in mind, was subject to revision by later national synods between 1560 and 1659, and the section which ultimately condemned "that custom used in some places of deputing certain ministers from the provincial synods to visit the churches" and which also rejected such titles of superiority as "elders of synods, superintendents and the like" is nowhere to be found in the earliest texts of the Discipline⁸⁰ and is an interpolation found in the much later compilation of Quick.⁸¹ By 1576 the superintendent, as such, had to all intents faded away in Scotland, though the term appears to have survived for longer in France where a national synod in 1603 decreed that the word "superintendent" was "not to be understood of any superiority of one pastor above another, but only in general of such as have office and charge in the church",⁸² a decision endorsed by the following national synod in 1607.⁸³

From a survey of the evidence it seems plain that the precedents of the French Calvinist church cannot lightly be dismissed, and indeed the whole pattern of ecclesiastical developments in both France and Scotland merits far greater attention than it has so far received. In each country, the initial wave of protestantism associated with Lutheranism gradually receded as Calvinism gained ground and emerged triumphant. The period of unorganised protestantism was drawing to an end. From 1555 onwards, the first French reformed churches had come into being with their own congregational consistories organised on the model of Geneva and ultimately, as was claimed, on the example of the primitive and apostolic church.⁸⁴ At precisely the same time an identical develop-

⁷⁷ BUK, i, 302-3, 318; Calderwood, *History*, iii, 332.

⁷⁸ BUK, i, 359.

⁷⁹ P. Schaff, *The Creeds of the Evangelical Protestant Churches*, iii, 378.

⁸⁰ E.g. *Histoire Ecclésiastique des Eglises Réformées au Royaume de France*, edd. G. Baum and E. Cunitz, 3 vols. (Paris, 1883-9), i, 215-220.

⁸¹ J. Quick, *Synodicon in Gallia Reformata*, 2 vols. (London, 1692), i, xx.

⁸² *Ibid.* 227; Aymon, *Tous les synodes nationaux des églises réformées de France*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1710), i, 259.

⁸³ Quick, *Synodicon*, i, 266; Aymon, *Tous les synodes*, i, 303.

⁸⁴ *Histoire Ecclésiastique*, i, 120.

ment occurred in Scotland where as early as 1555, according to one source,⁸⁵ a small secret protestant congregation with elected elders and deacons was active in Edinburgh, meeting by winter in merchants' houses and by summer in the fields. The creation of these enigmatic "privy kirks" of the 1550s foreshadowed the later organisation of the reformed church on a national basis.

Yet the striking similarity of developments in either country does not end here. In 1557 — a year in which Knox travelled through France from Geneva to Dieppe⁸⁶—"Articles of Polity" for a national church organisation were drafted by the ministers of Poitiers,⁸⁷ and in 1559—a year in which Knox was again in France⁸⁸—the French Discipline and the Confession of Faith were sanctioned and adopted by the first national synod of the French protestant church.⁸⁹ In both countries, the higher powers were antipathetic towards the reformed church and just as the Paris synod had provided French protestantism with a central unity and the prospect of a national organisation, so too did a group of Scots ministers, nobles and burgesses, meeting together in July 1560—in what may tentatively be regarded as the first general assembly—take action for the first time on a national level for the appointment (or for the regularisation of appointments) of ministers to reformed congregations. It is certainly significant that such a meeting should gather in St Giles, that it should be held for an ecclesiastical purpose, that it should have been composed of representatives of the three estates and that such a meeting, like later general assemblies, should take place immediately before a meeting of parliament.⁹⁰ It would seem therefore that this assembly in some tentative sense constituted the first general assembly of the reformed church and that it acted as a precedent for the assembly of December 1560 which historians have regarded as the first general assembly of the church.

Like their French counterparts, the Scots also drew up a Confession of Faith and Book of Discipline, and in the first regularly constituted general assembly of December 1560, composed of ministers, elders, burgesses, lairds and nobles,⁹¹ a further step was taken towards giving a national church a central directive. Yet it is curious that both the French Discipline and the Scottish Book of Discipline were singularly vague on the envisaged national court for each church. The original French Discipline contained a mere

⁸⁵ Calderwood, *History*, i, 303-4.

⁸⁶ Knox, *Works*, i, 269, 272; iv, 275, 286, 347.

⁸⁷ J. T. McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism*, 246.

⁸⁸ Knox, *Works*, vi, 11, 20, 21; Francisque-Michel, *Les Ecossais en France, les Français en Ecosse*, 2 vols. (London, 1862), i, 529, n.2.

⁸⁹ Quick, *Synodicon*, i, viif.

⁹⁰ Knox, *Works*, ii, 84-87; Calderwood, *History*, ii, 11; Spottiswoode, *History*, i, 325.

⁹¹ BUK, i, 3-4; SHS *Miscellany*, (Scottish History Society, Edinburgh), viii, (1951), 105.

two allusions to the national synod with no attempt at elaboration,⁹² and the Scottish Book of Discipline was even less forthcoming on the nature of what it called the "gret Counsall of the Church".⁹³ In practice, the French national synod, it is true, "consisted of ministers accompanied by one or two elders or deacons who had been elected by the local consistories",⁹⁴ and this has led some to deny any identity between the Scottish general assembly and the French national synod.⁹⁵ On the other hand, whilst it is true that ministers and elders constituted the essential element in national synods, it can still be demonstrated that it was by no means unknown for the nobility to be present at, and to vote in, national synods,⁹⁶ nor even for the judges, magistrates and council of the town where the synod was held to give their attendance.⁹⁷ Indeed, as late as 1607 when the national synod met at La Rochelle the deputies of the community and city demanded to be admitted and to be permitted to cast their vote in the election of the moderator. This resulted in "a very great debate" and although it was decided that the moderator should be elected by "such persons as were purely ecclesiastical" the deputies were nevertheless admitted and accorded the privilege of voting in the synod.⁹⁸

The similarity with Scotland is too obvious to be overlooked where nobles, lairds and burgesses are said to have sat side by side with ministers and elders in the general assembly from its inception.⁹⁹ Although historians are by no means agreed on the precedents which made for the assembly's creation, evidence of this nature would certainly go some way to confirm the views of at least one historian who has ventured to suggest that the idea of the assembly was:¹⁰⁰

"borrowed from France, where, as in Scotland, an independent Church required an independent central board of control. Without the Assembly the Church would have fallen permanently under the domination of the civil authorities as happened in England. The Assembly remains peculiarly symbolic of spiritual independence."

If the French Discipline of 1559 was inexplicit on the nature of the national synod, it was scarcely more forthcoming on the subject of the colloquy as a court intermediate between the congre-

⁹² *Histoire Ecclésiastique*, i, 219, 220.

⁹³ Knox, *Works*, ii, 226; cf. 194, 204 n.l., 208, 250-1.

⁹⁴ G. Donaldson, *The Scottish Reformation*, 143; Quick, *Synodicon*, i, 2; Aymon, *Tous les synodes*, i, 2.

⁹⁵ G. Donaldson, *The Scottish Reformation*, 143, 148.

⁹⁶ *Histoire Ecclésiastique*, ii, 53; Quick, *Synodicon*, i, 116, 129; Aymon, *Tous les synodes*, i, 126, 139.

⁹⁷ Quick, *Synodicon*, i, 116, 129; Aymon, *Tous les synodes*, i, 126, 139.

⁹⁸ Quick, *Synodicon*, i, 263; Aymon, *Tous les synodes*, i, 299.

⁹⁹ *SHS Miscellany*, viii, 105.

¹⁰⁰ G. D. Henderson, *Presbyterianism*, 104.

gational consistory and the provincial synod. The earlier text of the Discipline contains a single sentence on the "colloquy or synod"¹⁰¹ and it seems clear that the sustained discourse on the colloquy in the final version of the Discipline¹⁰² was a later insertion. It is an indisputable fact, however, that colloquies did emerge in the early 1560s, though their existence at first seems sometimes to have been decidedly precarious.¹⁰³ Only in areas where six or more ministers from adjacent parishes could conveniently assemble were colloquies able to be formed.¹⁰⁴ In Scotland, the general assembly experienced similar difficulties in its efforts to encourage the "exercise" as a regular occasion set aside for interpreting scripture by ministers from the surrounding parishes.¹⁰⁵ It was not until 1572 that the French church resolved to amend its Discipline by inserting a section defining the nature of the colloquy as a distinct institution. "The neighbour-churches", it was accordingly enacted, "shall assemble themselves in colloquies four times a year, if possibly they can, and each minister shall come accompanied with one elder, not only for this end, that ministers in their respective turns may handle a common place in divinity from the scriptures, but that by mutual common counsel they may compose those emergent difficulties which trouble their churches".¹⁰⁶ The parallel here with Scotland is too marked to be ignored or lightly cast aside; and it was not altogether coincidental that this increased emphasis on the colloquy in France should be matched a few years later in Scotland first with the fostering of the exercise as an administrative unit and, in 1578, with its merging finally with the new regional presbytery.¹⁰⁷

While minor differences in procedure inevitably developed as each church made its own rules and regulations, it still seems plain that the conciliar government of each church evolved along fundamentally similar lines, and even in the national assemblies of either church the same device was adopted of introducing the rotating office of moderator, with one or more assessors to assist him in his work.¹⁰⁸ Investigations of other polities, including those of Lutheran churches, have failed to produce any parallel as close or as meaningful as that which characterised the organisation of the Scottish and French churches; and apart from the brief inter-

¹⁰¹ *Historie Ecclésiastique*, i, 216.

¹⁰² E.g. *Discipline or Book of Order of the Reformed Churches of France*, ed. M. G. Campbell, (London, 1924), 25; Quick, *Synodicon*, i, xxxvii-xxxviii.

¹⁰³ Quick, *Synodicon*, i, 3, 63; Aymon, *Tous les synodes*, i, 2, 66.

¹⁰⁴ Quick, *Synodicon*, i, 4; Aymon, *Tous les synodes*, i, 3.

¹⁰⁵ *BUK*, i, 26, 57, 270.

¹⁰⁶ Quick, *Synodicon*, i, 106; Aymon, *Tous les synodes*, i, 114.

¹⁰⁷ *BUK*, i, 265, 357, 430, 439, 465-8; *Wodrow Society Miscellany*, ed. D. Laing, (Edinburgh, 1844), i, 407-8.

¹⁰⁸ E.g. Quick, *Synodicon*, i, 2, 12, 129, 136, 143, 157, 174; Aymon, *Tous les synodes*, i, 1, 13, 138, 147, 155, 173, 194.

lude of the Leith episcopacy it seems clear that the salient features of the Scottish polity were adopted not from Scandinavia and England but are rather to be traced to those continental churches which could exhibit a polity as well as a theology which was unmistakably Calvinist in the fullest sense of that term.

If the hypothesis is correct that many of the conspicuous features of the Scottish polity were derived from Calvinist rather than Lutheran countries, one would expect to find corroborative evidence of contact between Scotland and centres of Calvinism abroad. Mention may be made of Knox's peregrinations through France and Switzerland,¹⁰⁹ of his "great intelligence" with the French church,¹¹⁰ and of Andrew Melville's departure in 1564 for France and ultimately for Switzerland.¹¹¹ An indication of the lively interest which the Scots took in the fortunes of French protestantism is revealed in the publication of Beza's *Oration* to the colloquy of Poissy in September 1561, which Lekprevik printed in Edinburgh that same year, and equally in the publication of *Ane Answer made the fourth day of September 1561*, which John Barron (a resident with Knox at Geneva and later minister at Galston) translated from French for the benefit of the godly in Scotland and which was published in Edinburgh in 1562 by the same printer.¹¹²

Contact between Scotland and Geneva, in particular, from a relatively early date is illustrated in the arrival at Geneva in 1554—a year in which Knox was resident there¹¹³—of an unidentified Scotsman who requested the Venerable Company, apparently without success to licence him as a preacher.¹¹⁴ Among the Marian exiles who sought refuge on the continent were a number of Scots: David Simson, John Willock, John Rough, Alexander Cockburn of Ormiston and John Borthwick.¹¹⁵ Those known to have been resident in Geneva include John Davidson, possibly the principal of Glasgow university,¹¹⁶ Sir John Borthwick and "John Kellye his page",¹¹⁷ David Lindsay, later minister at Leith,¹¹⁸ John Baron,

¹⁰⁹ Knox, *Works*, i, 232, 253, 254; iii, 235; iv, 245; Row, *The History of the Kirk of Scotland*, ed. D. Laing, (Wodrow Society, Edinburgh, 1842), 9.

¹¹⁰ Knox, *Works*, ii, 137.

¹¹¹ Melville, *Autobiography and Diary*, ed. R. Pitcairn, (Wodrow Society, Edinburgh, 1842), 39-42.

¹¹² A. W. Pollard and G. R. Redgrave, *A Short-Title Catalogue*, (London, 1956), nos. 2000, 2026. Copies of both works are located in NLS.

¹¹³ Knox, *Works*, i, 231-232.

¹¹⁴ *Registres de la Compagnie des Pasteurs de Genève au temps de Calvin*, edd. R.-M. Kingdon and J.-F. Bergier, ii, (Geneva, 1962), 57.

¹¹⁵ C. Garrett, *The Marian Exiles*, (Cambridge, 1938), 101, 121, 274, 288, 336-7.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.* 141.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.* 101.

¹¹⁸ *Livre des habitants de Genève*, ed. P.-F. Geisendorf, i, 1549-1560. (Geneva, 1957), 139; *Livre des Anglois* in C. Martin, *Les Protestants Anglais*, (Geneva, 1915), 334.

who became minister at Galston,¹¹⁹ Sir James Sandelands of Torphichen,¹²⁰ Thomas Drummond,¹²¹ James Lambe *rubantier*, a native of Leith,¹²² William Keith and his wife, together with Knox, Marjorie his wife, Elizabeth her mother, James Hamilton his servant, and Patrick his pupil.¹²⁴ Other arrivals in Geneva include the godly James Baron and the no less godly James Syme who brought Knox a letter in May 1557 from the Lords of the Congregation inviting him to return to Scotland.¹²⁵ In 1559 the Earl of Arran fled from France to Geneva to escape persecution;¹²⁶ and six years later the earl of Moray dutifully made what might almost seem to be the customary pilgrimage to Geneva after having conferred with Condé and Coligny in France.¹²⁷ Other Scots known to have made the journey to Geneva in the 1560s include Alexander Young, the cousin of James Melville and nephew of Henry Scrimgeour the Scots professor of law at Geneva,¹²⁸ Alexander Campbell, bishop of Brechin,¹²⁹ and Andrew Polwart, later minister at Paisley.¹³⁰ George Gillespie and William Collace were two regents who left St Andrews for Geneva in the 1570s,¹³¹ and even Patrick Adamson had met Beza and studied theology at Geneva.¹³² Elements of the Scottish nobility were also attracted to Geneva. Both James Lindsay, son of the Earl of Crawford and minister at Fettercairn, and William Keith, brother of the Earl Marischal, died there.¹³³ It is notable, too, that after leaving Scotland in 1594, the young Earl of Gowrie should on Rollock's recommendation make a point of meeting Beza in Geneva¹³⁴ and should thereafter correspond with the Genevan.¹³⁵

¹¹⁹ C. Garrett, *The Marian Exiles*, 81; C. Martin, *Les Protestants Anglais*, 44, 70, 142, 241, 242, 260; cf. Knox, *Works*, vi, 534n.

¹²⁰ *Livre des habitants de Genève*, i, 213; C. Martin, *Les Protestants Anglais*, 47.

¹²¹ *Livre des habitants de Genève*, i, 213.

¹²² *Ibid.* 202.

¹²³ C. Martin, *Les Protestants Anglais*, 333; C. Garrett, *The Marian Exiles*, 204-5.

¹²⁴ C. Martin, *Les Protestants Anglais*, 332.

¹²⁵ Knox, *Works*, i, 268.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.* vi, 53; *Papiers d'état pièces et documents inédits on peu connus relatifs à l'histoire de l'Ecosse au XVI^e siècle*, ed. A. Teulet, (Paris, 1851-60), i, 460-1, and n.l.

¹²⁷ *Relations Politiques de la France et de l'Espagne avec l'Ecosse au XVI^e siècle*, ed. A. Teulet, v, (Paris, 1862), 24.

¹²⁸ Melville, *Diary*, 30.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.* 42.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ *Ibid.* 51; T. McCrie, *Life of Andrew Melville*, (Edinburgh, 1899), 411.

¹³² *Dictionary of National Biography*, i, 112.

¹³³ H. Scott, *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanæ*, 9 vols. (Edinburgh, 1915-61), v, 461; T. McCrie, *Life of Andrew Melville*, 411.

¹³⁴ Calderwood, *History*, vi, 67; J. Scott, *A History of the Life and Death of John, Earl of Gowrie*, (Edinburgh, 1818), 109-110.

¹³⁵ W. F. Arbuckle, "The Gowrie Conspiracy", *SHR*, xxxvi, (1957), 1-24, 89-110, at 106, 110.

It was, indeed, as a centre of learning that Geneva drew a not inconsiderable number of Scottish students and scholars: Melville may have been one of the better known, but he was only following in the footsteps of others. Among the Scots enrolled in the Academy when the register begins was Peter Young, "Scotus Dundonensis" in 1559,¹³⁶ followed by Gilbert Moncrieff, the friend of Melville and later royal physician, in 1567, John Skeyne in 1569, David Hume, a law student, and James Haldane, a language and theology student, in 1579, Andrew Lamb in 1584-5, Archibald Hunter, a philosophy student, in 1589, Robert Wimeus in 1597, William London in 1598, and John Cameron and James Erskine in 1606.¹³⁷ Unlike the many Scots abroad who visited the Baltic, the Low Countries and France for trade and commerce, those Scots whom we have been able to trace and who made the arduous journey to Geneva did so with one object in mind, to discover for themselves what Knox had called that "maist perfyt schoole of Chryst that ever was in the erth since the dayis of the Apostillis",¹³⁸ that "most godlie Reformed Churche and citie of the world, Geneva".¹³⁹ Apart from personal visits, contact with Geneva was sustained through correspondence, and although Knox and Goodman are perhaps among the best known of Calvin's correspondents from Scotland,¹⁴⁰ there were other Scots, too, who kept Calvin carefully informed of Scottish affairs during the critical years of the Reformation. In September 1560, an account was despatched to Calvin keeping him abreast of the reformers' progress in Scotland,¹⁴¹ and in July 1561 no less a person than James Stewart, the half brother of the queen and a key figure in the political wing of the reforming movement, who, incidentally had Calvin's works in his library,¹⁴² was in communication with the Genevan reformer.¹⁴³

Although Calvin died in 1564, continuing Scottish contact with Geneva is reflected in Beza's letter to Bullinger in Zurich in December 1566 in which the Genevan went so far as to enclose "a specimen of the very extensive correspondence of Knox from which you will learn the entire condition of Scotland".¹⁴⁴ That same year also witnessed the assembly's reply to a letter which Beza had sent Knox requesting the Scottish church

¹³⁶ *Le Livre du Recteur de l'Académie de Genève*, ed. S. Stelling-Michaud, 2 vols. (Geneva, 1959), i, 81; C. Borgeaud, *Historie de l'Université de Genève: L'Académie de Calvin, 1559-1789*, (Geneva, 1900), 55.

¹³⁷ *Le Livre du Recteur de l'Académie de Genève*, i, 96, 99, 103, 113, 116, 119, 125.

¹³⁸ Knox, *Works*, iv, 240.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.* ii, 16; vi, 16; cf. v, 211-216.

¹⁴⁰ CR, XLVI, *Calvini Opera*, XVIII (Brunswick, 1878), nos. 3340, 3377, 3378.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.* no. 3251.

¹⁴² J. Durkan and A. Ross, *Early Scottish Libraries*, 149.

¹⁴³ CR, XLVI, *Calvini Opera*, XVIII, no. 3435.

¹⁴⁴ Knox, *Works*, vi, 550.

to accord its approval of the Helvetic Confession of 1566.¹⁴⁵ In 1569, Beza was again in correspondence with Knox to whom he presented a copy of his treatise on marriage and divorce, along with a second copy which he somewhat inappropriately bade Knox give to that irascible bachelor, George Buchanan,¹⁴⁶ who was also in correspondence with Beza.¹⁴⁷ For Beza, there was as yet little need for any intervention in a church which from its creation had the closest of ties with Geneva, but with the emergence of a formal episcopate in Scotland, professedly based on Anglican procedure,¹⁴⁸ Beza felt compelled to warn Knox in 1572 of the inherent dangers which he detected within such a system.¹⁴⁹

Outwith Geneva and France, Scotland's brand of Calvinism was sustained through associations with the Rhineland and the Netherlands as Calvinism spread in Europe. The university town of Heidelberg in the Palatinate, for example, soon established its reputation as an international centre of Calvinist thought.¹⁵⁰ The university which satisfied the intellectual predilections of such English radicals as George Withers and Thomas Cartwright also attracted within its confines an interesting assortment of Scots who weathered the vicissitudes of overseas travel to study at this centre of orthodox Calvinism. In the first half of the sixteenth century, no Scots at all seem to have matriculated at Heidelberg, but as soon as Calvinism made inroads in the Palatinate under Frederick III (1559-73) three Scots arrived to enroll at Heidelberg between 1568 and 1570.¹⁵¹ Nor was it mere coincidence that no further Scots should venture to attend during the regime of Louis VI (1576-83) who as a Lutheran deposed and exiled the Calvinist ministers and professors. But it is an observable fact that with the subsequent restoration of Calvinism on Louis' death in 1583 no fewer than twenty-five Scots chose to matriculate at Heidelberg between 1587 and 1614,¹⁵² a figure considerably in

¹⁴⁵ *The Zurich Letters*, ed. Hastings Robinson, 2 vols. (Parker Society, Cambridge, 1842-5), ii, 362-5; Knox, *Works*, vi, 544-550. The critical attitude of Scottish reformers to the celebration of festivals, which led them to take exception to the section on festivals in the second Helvetic Confession, is comparable with that of the citizens of Geneva, who in 1550 in General Council pronounced "un edict de l'abrogation de toutes les festes, reservant le jour du dimanche, comme il est ordonné de Dieu". See *Registres de la Compagnie des Pasteurs de Genève au temps de Calvin*, ed. J-F. Bergier, i, (Geneva, 1964), 74.

¹⁴⁶ Knox, *Works*, vi, 562-5.

¹⁴⁷ Beza, *Epistolae Theologicae*, (1574), no. lxxviii, p. 343; Buchanan, *Epistolae*, (1711 edn.), 22-23, 41-43, 72-73.

¹⁴⁸ *CSP Scot.*, iv, no. 149, pp. 133-4.

¹⁴⁹ Knox, *Works*, vi, 613-615; Beza, *Epistolae Theologicae*, no. lxxix, p. 344-6.

¹⁵⁰ C-P. Clasen, *The Palatinate in European History 1559-1660*, (Oxford, 1963), 6, 33, 35.

¹⁵¹ *Die Matrikel der Universität Heidelberg von 1386 bis 1662*, ed. G. Toepke, ii, (1554-1662), (Heidelberg, 1886), 45, 54.

¹⁵² *Ibid.* 133, 143, 166, 174, 186, 187, 198, 215, 216, 225, 226, 235, 238, 245, 246, 257, 264, 268, 565, 566.

excess of those identifiable Scots who enrolled in the same period at Oxford with its many constituent colleges. Indeed, if compared with the early seventeenth century when Scots returned in more significant numbers to tread the not unfamiliar path to Oxford,¹⁵³ the number of known Scots who went there in the late sixteenth century was apparently meagre if not negligible.¹⁵⁴ If Scottish Calvinists were disinclined to attend in any appreciable numbers, it is curious that Andrew Melville, despite his presbyterianism, should keep in touch with Oxford and should apparently encourage several of his students to continue their studies there.¹⁵⁵ The number of Scots who decided to send their sons to England's other university is harder to determine since the printed register of matriculations and degrees does not normally distinguish students' nationality or place of residence; but if John Knox really intended that his sons should go to Cambridge — they matriculated eight days after his death¹⁵⁶ — he did at least ensure that they were educated in a radical environment where Calvinism had evidently left its mark.¹⁵⁷

Even beyond the environs of the universities, there was in practice ample scope for thorough-going Calvinists in both countries to make common cause. Leaders of the Scottish church like Knox and Melville seem to have shared a concept of the church with such English radicals as Whittingham, Humphrey. Sampson, Gilby and Wilcox and with such later presbyterians as Cartwright, Field and Travers. Their vision of the church was one which required a thorough reformation on the model of the "best reformed churches", with a separate ecclesiastical jurisdiction, to whose discipline all alike, both great and small, would be subject, a church in which there was no predisposition to accept lordship in the ministry or any especial need to "tarry for the magistrate", a church in which *adiaphora* or things indifferent would not be enjoined so as to become things essential. Contact between English radicals and ministers of the Scottish church had of course been longstanding. Willock, Knox and Goodman had each pursued careers on both sides of the border and the latter two are known not only to have shown sympathy with the "puritan" cause in England but also to have criticised aspects of the Church of England's organisation and worship.¹⁵⁸ Knox's

¹⁵³ *Register of the University of Oxford*, ed. A. Clark, II, i, (Oxford, 1887), 264, 267, 268, 272, 275, 279, 280, 281, 282, 343-4.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.* 372-3, 388.

¹⁵⁵ BM, Harleian MSS, 7004, fo 5; cf. Calderwood, *History*, iv, 201; Melville, *Diary*, 219; *Register of the University of Oxford*, II, i, 372-3.

¹⁵⁶ J. Ridley, *John Knox*, (Oxford, 1968), 520; *The Book of Matriculations and Degrees, 1544-1659*, ed. J. Venn, (Cambridge, 1913), 406.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. H. C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge*, (Cambridge, 1958); M. H. Curtis, *Oxford and Cambridge in Transition, 1558-1642*, (Oxford, 1959).

¹⁵⁸ E.g. Knox, *Works*, v, 515-16, 518-19; vi, 12-13, 83; *CSP Scot.*, i, no. 554.

standing among Marian exiles in Geneva and among later English puritans was undoubtedly high. His writings were included in that puritan document *The Seconde Parte of a Register*¹⁵⁹ and to the presbyterian John Field, in particular, who printed one of his sermons and who was anxious to obtain the rest of his works, Knox wrote "both godly and diligently, in questions of divinitie, and also of Church pollicie".¹⁶⁰ Scotland, as one of the comparatively few countries where a thorough-going Calvinist discipline had been established, stood in marked contrast with what English puritans felt to be the but half-reformed state of the Church of England,¹⁶¹ and it therefore afforded English puritans with a place of refuge wherein they could experience that discipline they craved for England: in 1568 the bishop of London criticised that "wilfull companie" of English puritans who had just returned from Scotland.¹⁶² Equally, since there were also Scots who served in the English church,¹⁶³ it was not altogether inappropriate that the Church of Scotland should intervene in 1566 in the vestiarian controversy by urging the bishops and pastors in England to use restraint in their dealings with "these godlie and our belovit brethren" who, in conscience, had felt bound to reject the "unprofitable apparrell" which was variously identified with "Romish ragges" and "badges of idolaters".¹⁶⁴

In later years, whilst Patrick Adamson sought to enlist the support of the English hierarchy in his attempts at conformity with England,¹⁶⁵ men of a more radical conscience in either land practised their own brand of conformity. In 1583, John Davidson was in correspondence with Field in England on whether the assembly should petition for "reformatioun of some abuses in your church and especially that sincere men may have libertie to preache without deposing be the tyrannie of the bishops".¹⁶⁶ Andrew Melville maintained a lasting friendship with Travers and Cartwright, once resident in Geneva in the early 1570s, whom he invited, albeit unsuccessfully, to St Andrews in 1580;¹⁶⁷ and Melville also granted letters of commendation to the Brownists on their arrival in St Andrews in 1584, though the initial friendship soon dissolved into bickering as the latter found themselves engaged in a dispute with Edinburgh presbytery for suggesting

¹⁵⁹ *The Seconde Parte of a Register*, ed. A. Peel, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1915), i, 46.

¹⁶⁰ Knox, *Works*, iv, 92.

¹⁶¹ Cf. P. Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 29ff.

¹⁶² BM, Lansdowne MSS. 10, fo 146r.

¹⁶³ G. Donaldson, "Foundations of Anglo-Scottish Union", *Elizabethan Government and Society*. (1961), 302ff.

¹⁶⁴ *BUK*, i, 85-88.

¹⁶⁵ G. Donaldson, "The Attitude of Whitgift and Bancroft to the Scottish Church", *Trans. Royal Hist. Socy.*, 4th ser., xxiv, 95-115.

¹⁶⁶ NLS, Adv. MSS. 6.1.13, fo 42r.

¹⁶⁷ NLS, Wodrow MSS. folio vol. xlii, fos. 11v-12r; T. Fuller, *The Church History of Britain*, (London, 1842), IX, vii, 52.

that the discipline of the Scottish church was altogether amiss.¹⁶⁸ The flight to England of Scottish presbyterians in 1584 inevitably strengthened the links with their English counterparts;¹⁶⁹ and this was mirrored in the large attendance of English puritans at the funeral in London of James Lawson, the exiled presbyterian minister from Edinburgh.¹⁷⁰ Not only did John Uddall visit Scotland in 1589,¹⁷¹ but it was also symptomatic of the close relations between Calvinists in either country that John Bonnar should present to Dalkeith presbytery in 1592 his testimonial “fra the faythfull brether of the ministerie in England”;¹⁷² that “Mr Banford minister at the Newcastle in England” should look to Scotland to seek the assistance of the synod of Lothian in 1593 “concerning the estate of thair kirk thair”¹⁷³ and that he should later contribute a sum of money for the relief of some Melvillian ministers;¹⁷⁴ and that “Maister Cartwrycht” should be invited to become minister of Edinburgh in 1596.¹⁷⁵ The relationship established between fellow Calvinists, in discipline as well as in theology, in both lands was evidently one of continuing commitment to a common cause.

The Calvinism which prevailed in Scotland in the period of the Reformation, it need scarcely be said, was not necessarily a mere replica of the Calvinism of Geneva which eventually atrophied. Its ethos had immeasurably transcended the boundaries of that Swiss republican city. Beyond Geneva, Calvinism had expanded and matured. Its substance had penetrated France and the Rhineland as well as much of Switzerland and its theology had left a deep, and never entirely eradicable, impression on the Church of England. It was with these practical examples of the operation of a Calvinist system that reformers were able to adapt the spirit of international Calvinism to meet their own requirements. Calvin himself could hardly have approved of the political theories of “neo-Calvinists” in either France or Scotland, but, as an entity, Scottish Calvinism in the late sixteenth century never underwent such an adaptation or metamorphosis which its creator would have recognised as a system other than his own. The theology and discipline which prevailed in post-Reformation

¹⁶⁸ Calderwood, *History*, iv, 1-3.

¹⁶⁹ G. Donaldson, “The Scottish Presbyterian Exiles in England, 1584-8”, *ante*, xiv, 67-80.

¹⁷⁰ BM, Additional MSS. 4736, fo 166v; *Selections from Wodrow's Biographical Collections*, ed. R. Lippe, (New Spalding Club, Aberdeen, 1890), 231-2; *Wodrow Society Miscellany*, i, 451-2.

¹⁷¹ Calderwood, *History*, v, 58, 131-2.

¹⁷² SRO CH2/424/1. MS. Dalkeith Presbytery Records, 17 August 1592.

¹⁷³ SRO CH2/252/1. MS. Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale Records, fo 55r. 4 August 1593.

¹⁷⁴ Melville, *Diary*, 710; Calderwood, *History*, vi, 660.

¹⁷⁵ SRO CH2/121/2. MS. Edinburgh Presbytery Records, 7 September 1596.

Scotland continued to exhibit many of the distinctive traits of Calvin's system.

Admittedly, the indebtedness of one reformer to another, if somewhat intangible, was nonetheless an ever present reality. There was throughout a constant interchange of ideas as reformers shared experiences and borrowed from one another. In particular, Calvin's debt to Strasburg and to Martin Bucer, whom some have styled the "father of Calvinism", has been widely recognised;¹⁷⁶ but it is significant that a recent editor of Bucer's works should observe that "there is virtually no trace of any direct Buceran influence on the Scottish Church in the time of Knox, nor on Knox himself, though of course he, and through him Scotland, fell heirs to Genevan doctrines and institutions which owed their origin in part or in whole to Bucer rather than Calvin."¹⁷⁷

Inevitably, explorations in such a field as this are by their very nature apt to be tenuous and never entirely satisfactory, but sufficient evidence has been adduced to illustrate the range and nature of the close relationship with Geneva and other Calvinist centres which Scotland enjoyed at the Reformation and while other influences should not go unnoticed none has yet been shown to have been so sustained or so intimate as those between Scotland and the Calvinist churches abroad.

¹⁷⁶ E.g. W. Pauck, "Calvin and Butzer", *Journal of Religion*, IX, (1929), 237-256.

¹⁷⁷ *Common Places of Martin Bucer*, ed. D. F. Wright, (1972), 29.

